

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD).

THE RYAN WHITE HIV/AIDS TREATMENT MODERNIZATION ACT

• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the Senate's unanimous passage of the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Treatment Modernization Act earlier this week. It has been 25 years since the first AIDS diagnosis in the United States. At present, approximately 40,000 Americans are newly infected with this disease each year, and more than half of those diagnoses are in people under age 25. This is a disease that has taken its toll on millions of individuals and families, but as a result of combined Federal, State and local efforts to support individuals living with this disease as well as advances in treatment options, many Americans living with HIV/AIDS continue to have thriving, productive lives.

Since 1990, when the Ryan White CARE Act was first authorized, we have made incredible strides in treating and caring for individuals in the United States affected by HIV/AIDS. The number of new infections each year has dropped from more than 100,000 in 1990 to approximately 40,000 today. Mother-to-child transmission has dropped from 2,000 to fewer than 200 cases annually. Life expectancy for those with the disease has increased by almost 20 years. In fact, more people are now living with AIDS in the United States than at any other time in the epidemic.

The Ryan White CARE Act is at least partially responsible for these successes. But there is much more work to be done. It is estimated that more than a quarter of those infected with HIV do not know it, and many who do know it still do not have access to needed care and services. And HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects the poor and minorities. African Americans account for up to 54 percent of new HIV infections and Latinos account for 19 percent of new infections, though they account for only approximately 12 percent and 13 percent of the U.S. population, respectively. Hispanic and African-American women account for 82 percent of new infections among females in the United States.

For many years I have been particularly concerned about the impact this disease has on children and families. Last year, Senator BOND and I introduced legislation to reauthorize and strengthen title IV of the Ryan White CARE Act. For those who are unfamiliar with title IV, it provides grants for coordinated care, services, and research for women, infants, children, and youth. The programs and services funded by title IV have kept families alive and together. For example, title IV projects have led the way toward reducing mother-to-child transmission from more than 2,000 babies born HIV-positive each year to fewer than 200. In

my home State of Connecticut, a total of 213 babies have been born to HIV-positive mothers since 2002. Of that total, only one baby has been confirmed as HIV-positive.

The bill passed earlier this week by the Senate contains many significant improvements to title IV that were part of the legislation Senator BOND and I introduced. I believe those changes will improve the treatment and services for women, families, and youth provided under the Ryan White CARE Act. However, I am deeply disappointed in the authorization level for title IV contained in the bill. All other titles of this bill authorize increases in funding except title IV, which is flat funded. I pushed hard to secure a comparable increase for title IV, and although I am disappointed with the final outcome, I realize this is an authorization bill, not an appropriations bill, and I will work to secure increased funding for this critical title.

Unfortunately, it appears that the 109th Congress will come to a close without the House and Senate having passed a Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill for fiscal year 2007. It is a failure on the part of the leaders in the House and Senate that we did not debate this bill and have an opportunity to increase funding for the Ryan White CARE Act. As we look to the next Congress, I urge my colleagues and the whole advocacy community to join me in fighting for providing adequate funding for this program.

I believe that the bill passed unanimously in the Senate is a fair compromise which stabilizes funding for cities and States and urban and rural areas for the next 3 years. Without this legislation, 17 States—including Connecticut—and the District of Columbia stand to lose millions of dollars next year. This legislation is now before the House of Representatives. It is my hope that the house will act quickly to pass this legislation so that these States and the District do not experience a disruption in critical care and treatment services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

In closing, I want to commend the hard work of the members and their staff in both Chambers who developed this bipartisan, bicameral compromise bill over the past 2 years. In particular, I would like to recognize Connie Garner with Senator KENNEDY and Shana Christrup with Senator ENZI who worked tirelessly to incorporate the priorities of many offices. I would also like to thank the many public health advocacy organizations who contributed to the development of this legislation. •

TRADE RELATIONS TO VIETNAM

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. President, in relation to the extension of permanent trade relations to Vietnam that the Senate is in the process of considering this evening, there is a finding in the bill that I want to call to the Senate's

attention. The finding notes that, "Vietnam has taken cooperative steps with the United States under the United States Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, formerly the Joint Task Force-Full Accounting, established in 1992 by President George H. W. Bush to provide the fullest possible accounting of MIA and POW cases."

I serve as the cochairman of the U.S./Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, and also have several close friends who have family members who are POW/MIAs and continue to search for their family members and for information that will bring them closure regarding their fate.

I think we can all agree that Vietnam has in fact taken cooperative steps along the lines of POW/MIA accounting with the United States. However, I think we can also all agree that Vietnam needs to take additional steps in this area. Specifically, I believe there are additional steps that Vietnam can take in providing the United States access to archives regarding POW/MIA cases in Laos and Cambodia. Cases of US service members lost in Laos and Cambodia are particularly difficult to resolve due to the difficulty of access to both archival information and the actual locations where service members are presumably missing. This is a specific area in which I hope that Vietnam can provide additional information and assistance to help the United States obtain the fullest possible accounting of POW/MIAs from the Vietnam war.

I want it to be clear that there is more work to be done on this issue and that we need to continue to conduct research, site visits and work closely with Vietnam, as well as their neighbors on this issue until we have accounted for every one of our POW/MIAs in Vietnam as well as other countries.

COMBATING AUTISM ACT, S. 843

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, yesterday, Congress confirmed its obligation to the thousands of individuals living with and families affected by autism by passing the Combating Autism Act of 2006, S. 843. I am extremely pleased that the Senate passed this bill and sent it to the White House for the President's signature.

This anticipated law has a long history. Senators SANTORUM and DODD worked diligently with me, Senator KENNEDY, and our staffs for the past 2 years to develop this crucial piece of legislation to assist individuals living with autism and other developmental disabilities and their families. This legislation focuses on expanding autism research and coordination of that research at the National Institutes of Health, NIH, and increasing awareness of autism and its manifestation through the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, CDC. In addition, the bill integrates the country's various

health, education, and disability programs serving children and families affected by autism. Finally, the bill provides a greater voice to the community of people affected by this disorder.

No one knows the cause of autism or exactly how many children are affected by autism and autism spectrum disorders; however, some studies suggest the numbers could be as high as 1 out of every 166 American children. But there are many things we do know about autism.

We know that early intervention is critical to helping children with autism reach their full potential. The earlier the intervention, the greater the chance a child has to grow and learn how to live with the disorder. Given the importance of early intervention, this bill will expand the necessary research to study the possible causes of autism especially at the critical early childhood development stages.

Also, we need greater understanding about the various forms of autism so that we can improve our ability to provide the right kinds of intervention and support. Finally, we need to provide better integration of the health, education, and disability programs already available to meet the anticipated and increasing demand for these interventions, supports, and services in the future.

The Combating Autism Act is an important step to address these needs and to find solutions that will improve the lives of children and families whose daily lives have been disrupted by autism.

I would like to close by adding my congratulations to the people who have had a key role in drafting and passing this key piece of health care legislation. First, I would like to thank my colleagues and their staff both in the Senate and in the House for their hard work in passing this critical legislation. I want to thank all the members of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, especially my friend and ranking member, Senator KENNEDY, for his hard work and determination to seeing this bill become law. In addition, I would like to thank and our colleagues in the House, Chairman BARTON and Representatives BONO and DEGETTE.

This bill is the result of a tremendous amount of work across party lines. I want to thank the original bill cosponsors, Senators SANTORUM and DODD, for introducing this legislation and for working with me to fine-tune it. They are to be commended for taking the lead on this issue and for the tremendous effort they put into making sure that some day we have a solution to autism.

Of course, in providing thanks to the Members, I would be remiss if I did not mention the staff. I would like to specifically acknowledge Randy Pate and Ryan Long, with Chairman BARTON's office; Caya Lewis with Senator KENNEDY's office; Jen Vesey with Senator

SANTORUM; Jim Fenton, Ben Berwick, Tamar Magarik, and Elizabeth Hoffman with Senator DODD; and Elizabeth Hall with Majority Leader FRIST.

Finally, I would like to give thanks to my staff, both past and present—Shana Christrup, Steve Northrup, Aaron Bishop, Brittany Moore, Tec Chapman, and Martina Bebin, all on my health and disability outreach teams, for their diligence and determination as we worked together to craft this important and essential bill. I also would like to thank Katherine McGuire, who as my staff director has provided the leadership and guidance to ensure that this bill made it into law.

This process involved many dedicated staffers and many late nights. Staff were crucial in helping us reach the final compromise.

I also want to thank the various groups and individuals who work on behalf of children and families affected by autism and other developmental disabilities. There are so many people, primarily parents of children who have autism or an autism spectrum disorder, who have worked for years to see this day come to fruition that I cannot thank each one of them individually, but they should know that I greatly appreciate their tireless efforts, determination, unlimited patience, and commitment to seeing this bill was passed on behalf of their children and all people living with autism, autism spectrum disorder, or other developmental disabilities.

This is a comprehensive piece of legislation that will take the next steps toward providing greater research so that we can provide children with autism early intervention to enable them to grow and reach their full potential. I am proud that we are taking this step to pass the Combating Autism Act.

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• Mr. DODD. Mr. President, I am extremely grateful that my Senate colleagues considered and passed the Combating Autism Act yesterday, following the House's passage yesterday afternoon. The Combating Autism Act promotes early detection, early evidence-based interventions, research, and services for individuals with autism. It also reauthorizes the epidemiologic surveillance programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This legislation is absolutely vital for the hundreds of thousands of families across America who struggle each and every day with autism, and I commend my Senate colleagues for passing it today so that the President can sign it into law before the end of the year.

Autism has a profound effect on children and their families. It affects a child's ability to communicate and to form relationships with others. Some children with autism are relatively high functioning, while others suffer from serious language delays, motor problems, and rigid behaviors. Because

autism is a spectrum disorder, symptoms range from mild to extremely severe. Many children with autism will require lifelong care.

Mr. President, health care for individuals with autism over their lifetimes costs approximately \$35 billion per year. By 2015, the annual cost of care could reach an estimated \$300 billion, but this figure can be cut in half with early diagnosis, services, and intervention. I believe strongly that to reduce the economic burden for individuals with autism and to ensure that children have a chance to achieve their highest potential and live productive and independent lives as adults, we must support aggressive efforts to understand what causes autism and to improve early screening, diagnosis, and services for individuals and their families who live with autism every day.

As my colleagues are well aware, the prevalence of autism in the United States is 10 times greater now than a decade ago. It is estimated that about 1 in 166 children born today will be diagnosed with autism by the time they reach school age, up from one in 10,000 in 1987. In my own State of Connecticut, autism diagnoses have increased eleven-fold since 1993. We simply must provide answers to all those affected by this devastating condition, and the Combating Autism Act is a critical first step.

There are many theories as to why autism diagnoses have increased. Some have suggested that it is simply a reflection of better diagnostic tools and measures. Other theories focus on genetic or environmental factors. But the fact is that when it comes to autism, we do not know what causes it, we do not know exactly how to diagnose it, and we still do not know how best to intervene.

What we do know is that growing numbers of children and their families suffer from and cope with this disorder, and we simply must do more to bring hope to all who are in its grip. This is why the Combating Autism Act is so important. By expanding the Federal response to autism and other developmental disabilities through the Combating Autism Act, we will see improved research on autism, including its causes, and families across America will get the services they so urgently need.

Mr. President, I commend my colleagues in the Senate and the House for acting on this important legislation. Although the Combating Autism Act has undergone some modification since the Senate first passed it in August of this year, and it is by no means a perfect bill, it provides an essential starting point in what I hope will be an ongoing legislative effort to provide hope and answers to the families across America who live and cope with autism every day. I am hopeful that the President will sign it into law before the end of the year. In my view, we must not lose the momentum that has brought us here today. Those children and their

families living with autism deserve our support now, and they deserve answers.

I'd like to conclude by thanking my colleagues, Senator SANTORUM, Chairman ENZI, ranking member Senator KENNEDY, and their staffs, as well as Chairman BARTON and ranking member Representative DINGELL and their staffs, for their extraordinary hard work on this bill. I also wish to offer my sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the individuals who are personally affected by autism and the many advocacy groups who represent them for their continued dedication and passionate commitment to this legislation.●

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CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS

● Mr. JEFFORDS. There are many issues on which we have made progress during my tenure as both chair and ranking member of the EPW Committee, and many issues on which we need to take steps forward. I want to thank Senator BOXER for her consistent leadership on environmental issues over the years, and I know she will do a phenomenal job leading the EPW Committee. There is an issue of great importance to many small Vermont farmers that we have not addressed this year, and that is the issue of concentrated animal feeding operations and CERCLA. I have written to Senator BOXER and provided her with some language reflecting the ideas I described in my statement, asking her to consider this approach as she holds hearings and moves forward on this issue in the 110th Congress.

Mrs. BOXER. I have received the Senator's letter, and he has my assurances that these ideas will be considered as the EPW Committee looks at this issue during the next Congress.

Mr. JEFFORDS. I thank the Senator.●

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SMALL FARM SUSTAINABILITY: ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS AND CERCLA

● Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about two issues that are of great importance to Vermonters—sustainable agriculture and environmental protections. Over the years, I have fought for education dollars when it seemed none were available. I have fought to protect the environment when its champions were few. But my greatest priority has been to find ways to ensure that Vermont agriculture, the lifeblood of our economy and our culture, remains sustainable and competitive into the future.

I have worked successfully in both the House and the Senate to help as-

sure dairy farmers of a fair and stable price for their milk, through the dairy compact and MILC Program. I have worked hard to provide strong Federal support for conservation programs, helping farmers to be good stewards of the land, while never compromising my commitment to environmental protection. I have supported the cider and cheese industries in the face of increasing Federal regulation and have promoted tax policy that allows for the intergenerational transfer of farms.

Today, I stand before you somewhat perplexed. For several months now, two of the issues where I have dedicated the majority of my time in public service—the environment and agriculture—have been seemingly at odds with one another.

In some States, lawsuits have been brought against large agricultural operations under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act, CERCLA. I have been contacted by a number of Vermont farmers very concerned about whether CERCLA applies to them and about what it would mean to be sued under this law.

In response to this concern, proposals have been made that would unnecessarily adopt expansive exemptions from the Superfund statute for major pollution streams stemming from very large agricultural operations. I cannot support these proposals that would eliminate one of the tools of last resort for communities with waters contaminated by large-scale animal feeding operations.

I have watched with regret as the face of American agriculture in some regions has changed from one of the individual family, working hard to extract their living from their land, to one of the corporate executive, leading massive agribusiness operations. With this type of consolidation, we have lost in many places, though not in Vermont, the reality of the hard-working family farming using sustainable practices. In many parts of the Nation, we see massive animal feeding operations, often controlled by corporate interests located outside the State, contributing significantly to local water quality problems. Allowing these large operations to simply walk away from the damage that they can cause to our local communities allows them to cut costs, tipping the economic scales in their favor when compared with smaller farms that have less environmental impacts. I wish to do everything in my power to ensure that this scenario never becomes the norm in Vermont.

Vermonters have a long tradition of strong feelings about water quality. In 1972, when the Clean Water Act was adopted by Congress, our Nation was faced with a water pollution crisis. Toxic materials were routinely dumped into pristine water bodies by industrial polluters. It was standard practice in municipalities to have underground pipes deliver raw sewage from homes

directly into rivers and streams without any intervening treatment. Citizens demanded action to solve our environmental problems. In 1970, I was the state attorney general of Vermont. My office worked to create Vermont Act 252, which enacted the toughest water pollution laws in the country at the time. I had the honor of testifying before this Committee during Senator Muskie's chairmanship during the first phases of the debate on the 1972 Clean Water Act. Some of the concepts in Act 252 are today part of Federal water pollution laws. One of my fondest memories from this period is of the slogan, "Jeffords Won't Let Them Do it in the Lake," which came about as we successfully fought off efforts by International Paper to dump untreated waste into Lake Champlain.

Despite progress on wastewater treatment and point sources of pollution like International Paper, by the mid-1980s, it was clear that without action on other water quality issues such as toxics like mercury and nonpoint source pollution from urban and agricultural sources, we would not be able to meet our clean water goals. In 1987, our own Senator Stafford of Vermont worked with champions like Senator John Chafee, Senator Mitchell, and Senator Bentsen to write the 1987 Clean Water Act amendments, overcoming the third Presidential veto in the act's history. Many of the key pieces of the 1987 amendments, in particular, nonpoint source pollution, continue to resonate in our clean water debate today.

Despite our progress on these issues, there is much to be done. According to the EPA, the overwhelming majority of the population of the United States—218 million people—live within 10 miles of a polluted river, lake or coastal water. Almost 40 percent of these waters are not safe for fishing, swimming, boating, drinking water or other needs. The EPA estimates that nonpoint sources of pollution are responsible for 50 percent of our water quality problems.

I discuss this history because it is relevant. I understand the impacts of nonpoint sources of pollution on water quality. I also understand the importance of small-scale farming to my home State of Vermont, and I do not believe that CERCLA is well suited, or was ever intended, to apply to the normal operations on Vermont-scale farms.

I am here today with my colleague from California, Senator Barbara Boxer, who will be taking over the helm of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. I know that the committee will be in good hands.

I have written to Senator BOXER and asked her to consider an alternative approach that I have put together on this issue of animal manure and CERCLA during the Committee's deliberations on this issue in the 110th Congress. This proposal takes steps to equalize the playing field between